



For Immediate Release — Monday, June 22, 2015

University of Lethbridge awarded record \$3.9 million in NSERC funding

The University of Lethbridge was awarded a record \$3.9 million of funding from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) this year, with U of L researchers earning support for projects in neuroscience, biological sciences, psychology, chemistry & biochemistry, physics & astronomy, geography and mathematics & computer science.

This unprecedented level of support was announced earlier today by Canada's Minister of State (Science and Technology), the Honourable Ed Holder, at a national funding announcement in Oshawa, Ont.

"This latest round of NSERC funding clearly demonstrates the outstanding research our faculty and students are undertaking," says Interim Vice-President (Research) Dr. Lesley Brown. "That our research portfolio continues to grow as it does is testament to the quality of the work being done and also speaks to the University striking the right balance as a comprehensive teaching and research institution."

University of Lethbridge researchers receiving NSERC Discovery Grant funding include: Dr. Gerlinde Metz (neuroscience); Dr. Aaron Gruber (neuroscience); Dr. Alice Hontela (biological sciences); Dr. Jean-Baptiste Leca (psychology); Dr. David Logue (psychology); Dr. Artur Luczak (neuroscience); Dr. Robert McDonald (neuroscience); Dr. Majid Mohajerani (neuroscience); Dr. Gregory Pyle (biological sciences); Dr. Masami Tatsuno (neuroscience); Dr. Paul Vasey (psychology); Dr. Robert Laird (biological sciences); Dr. René Boéré (chemistry & biochemistry); Dr. Paul Hayes (chemistry & biochemistry); Dr. Locke Spencer (physics & astronomy); Dr. Mark Walton (physics & astronomy); Dr. Christopher Hopkinson (geography); Dr. Robert Benkoczi (mathematics & computer science); Dr. Shahadat Hossain (mathematics & computer science); Dr. Habiba Kadiri (mathematics & computer science); Dr. Nathan Ng (mathematics & computer science).

In addition, Drs. John Zhang and Olga Kovalchuk were each awarded NSERC Discovery Development Grants.

Luczak and McDonald will also both receive an additional \$120,000 in funds through the Discovery Accelerator Supplements program (over a three-year period), while McDonald's base grant of \$355,000 (over five years) is the largest NSERC grant awarded to the U of L this year. He is studying neural circuits and mechanisms of context-specific conditioned inhibition.

The University's doctoral students were extremely successful in the NSERC Doctoral Scholarship competitions, led by Katie Wilson (chemistry & biochemistry), who was named a Canada Vanier Scholar, demonstrating leadership skills and a high standard of scholarly achievement in graduate studies. Jason Flindall (neuroscience) was awarded a Canadian Doctoral Scholarship, while Kayla Stone (neuroscience), Allonna Harker (neuroscience) and Stefan Lenz (chemistry & biochemistry) were awarded NSERC Postgraduate Doctoral Scholarships. Additionally, five masters students were awarded the NSERC Canadian Graduate Scholarship, including: Justin Lee (neuroscience), Serena Shandik (neuroscience), Matthew Robbins (physics & astronomy), Rhys Hakstol (chemistry & biochemistry) and Douglas Turnbull (chemistry & biochemistry).

"We are pleased with the amount of money invested in our researchers and what this could yield in terms of the results they will achieve and the benefits their work will bring to society," adds Brown. "Our continuing success with the federal research funding agencies is testament to our researchers' ability to compete on the national stage."

NSERC grants aim to develop, attract and retain the world's most talented researchers at Canadian universities who are working in a multitude of scientific and engineering disciplines.

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